

IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
DISTRICT OF MASSACHUSETTS

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA,

Plaintiff,

CHINESE PROGRESSIVE ASSOCIATION,
CHINATOWN RESIDENT ASSOCIATION,
CITY LIFE / VIDA URBANA, SIU TSANG,
FUNG YUNG, YAN HUI, MARIA ALTRECHE,

Proposed Plaintiff-Intervenors,

v.

CITY OF BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS; THOMAS M.
MENINO, in his official capacity as
Mayor of the City of Boston;
BOSTON CITY COUNCIL: MICHAEL F.
FLAHERTY, PAUL J. SCAPICCHIO, JAMES M.
KELLY, MAUREEN E. FEENEY, CHARLES C.
YANCEY, ROB CONSALVO, JOHN TOBIN, CHUCK
TURNER, MICHAEL P. ROSS, JERRY P.
MCDERMOTT, FELIX D. ARROYO, MAURA
HENNIGAN, STEPHEN J. MURPHY; BOSTON
ELECTION DEPARTMENT; GERALDINE CUDDYER,
in her official capacity as Chair of
the Boston Election Department,

Defendants.

CIVIL ACTION No.
05-11598WGY

DECLARATION

THREE-JUDGE COURT
WGY, PS, SL

DECLARATION OF MARIA ALTRECHE

I, Maria Altreche, declare under penalty of perjury that the following is true and correct:

1. I was born and raised in Quebradillas, Puerto Rico. Since 1996, I have lived in Boston, Massachusetts. I currently live at 32 Everett Street in Hyde Park. I am registered to vote.

2. Spanish is my first language. My English is horrible. I hardly speak any English.

3. Since 1996, I have voted at the Hyde Park Municipal Building. I believe that my polling site serves many Latinos because every time I vote there, I see several Latinos.

4. For the November 2004 election, I had to wait for my husband to get off of work before I could go vote. I had to wait for him because I knew, based on past experience, that there would be no Spanish-speaking poll workers at my site. Since I began voting at the Hyde Park Municipal Building in 1996, in at least three elections, there has never been a Spanish-speaking poll worker. Because I cannot vote without the assistance of an interpreter, I had to wait until my husband, who is bilingual, came home from work. We went to vote around 6:00 p.m.

5. My husband and I arrived at the polling site, and we approached the check-in table. An English-speaking poll worker then asked us for some information and my husband responded in English. My husband had to respond for me because I did not understand what the poll worker was saying. We then received our ballots and went to the voting booths together. I entered into a voting booth by myself, and my husband entered into the one next to me. My husband marked his ballot and deposited it into the ballot box while I was examining my ballot. The ballot was in English only, and I did not understand it. An English-speaking poll worker approached me and began talking to me in English. My husband then came over to where I was and told the poll worker that I did not speak English and that he would assist me. I know this because my husband later told me in Spanish what he had told the poll worker. My husband then entered the voting booth with me and translated the ballot for me. He pointed to where the presidential candidates were on the ballot and where the other candidates were located. He also explained to me how to fill in the oval next to the candidate of my choice. Without his help, I would have had a lot more difficulty voting because there were no Spanish-speaking poll workers at the site.

6. I did not see any sample ballots, signs, or documents in Spanish posted on the voting booth or near it.

7. In 2000, I went to vote with my husband after he got off of work. Again, I had to wait for him to get off of work before going to vote because I was anticipating that there would be no Spanish-speaking poll workers. When we arrived at the site, we checked in and went to the voting booths, where there were large machines that had levers on them. There were no Spanish-speaking poll workers. My husband voted, but I did not know how to operate the machine so I was stuck in my voting booth, not knowing what to do. My husband approached me, and I told him that I did not understand the machine. My husband tried to help me but an English-speaking female poll worker told him that since he had already voted, he had to leave the area. I told my husband to tell the poll worker that I did not understand how to operate the machine and that I needed help. My husband translated this for me, but the poll worker insisted that he move on. My husband walked away and I was left by myself in the booth. No poll worker came to assist me, but even if they had, I would not have understood them because they spoke only English. I moved a small lever in an attempt to pick the presidential candidate I wanted to vote for and then pulled the big lever. The only reason why I knew how to do this was because my husband had told me a little bit about what to do to operate the machine before we arrived at the polling site. I am not sure if I voted for the candidate I wanted to vote for. I believe and hope I did, but I am not sure.

8. When I left the polling place, I told my husband, "I voted, but I don't know if I voted for who I wanted to vote for because I couldn't understand how to work that machine!"

9. If there had been a Spanish-speaking poll worker at the site, I would have known what I was doing and would have felt more confident about who I was voting for. In addition, I

would not have had to wait for my husband to get home from work and depend on him to vote.

I declare under the penalty of perjury and pursuant to Title 28 of the United States Code, Section 1746, that the foregoing is true and correct to the best of my knowledge, recollection, and belief. I have reviewed this declaration with SCAR LORTON of CITY LIFE / VIDA VERDE, who translated it into Spanish, and believe it accurately reflects my statements and experience.

Dated: 9/8/05

Maria Altreche
Maria Altreche

I, SCAR LORTON, certify under penalty of perjury that I am fluent in both Spanish and English and that I have correctly and accurately translated this document from English to Spanish and that Maria Altreche has assured me that she understands this document.

Dated: 9/8/05

Scar Lorton